

ASSISTANT SECRETARY OF STATE  
WASHINGTON

November 21 1955

Dear Allen:

During the interagency meeting of October 6, general agreement was expressed to the necessity for strengthening SEATO. Admiral Radford made special reference to the Free World position in Laos and the program proposed by the Embassy at Bangkok in its telegram No. 856 of September 23, 1955.

In September of 1953 Psychological Strategy Board Document #23 (PSB D-23) was presented to and approved by the National Security Council. Phase I of this document required certain actions be taken to strengthen Thailand as a base of operations. Phase II was concerned with plans and operations into neighboring communist-threatened areas using Thailand as a base. The NSC in 1953 authorized immediate implementations of Phase I, but required that specific approval be obtained before Phase II was initiated.

In view of conditions now prevailing in Southeast Asia, I am of the opinion that the concept of forward strategy inherent in Phase II of PSB D-23 might now be successfully implemented.

I suggest, therefore, that a select committee of representatives from State, Defense, and CIA be established to revise PSB D-23 and prepare from it an up-to-date outline plan of operations based on Thailand, for early submission to the NSC.

This outline plan would incorporate the program proposed in Bangkok's 856 and take into account the Manila Pact and other appropriate United States policy considerations in Southeast Asia and neighboring areas.

I would

The Honorable  
Allen W. Dulles,  
Director of Central Intelligence,  
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State Department review completed

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I would appreciate your views on this matter, and if you concur, the name of the officer designated to work on the select committee.

Sincerely yours,

  
Walter S. Robertson

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